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Publication No. 4

CANADA

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE MOTHER

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOKS
MOTHER'S SERIES

ISSUED BY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, CANADA
OTTAWA

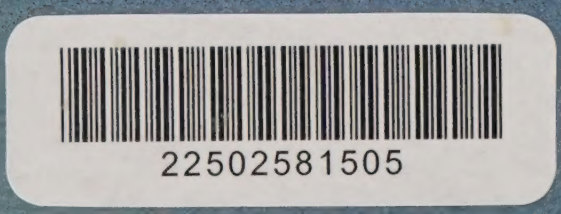
The Shepherdess

"She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep.
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in her sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep."

—Alice Meynell.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Sun, Air and a Short Morning Rest. Courtesy of the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, Ottawa.

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DOMINION OF CANADA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE MOTHER

BY

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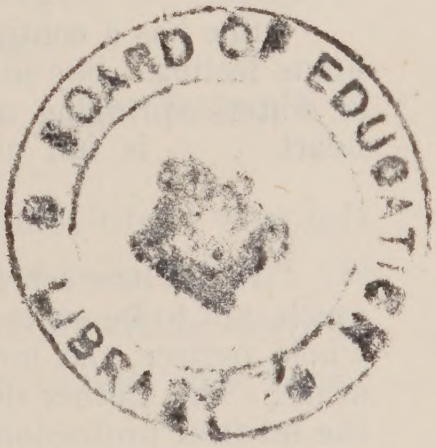

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOKS

MOTHER'S SERIES

Ottawa
F. A. ACLAND
PRINTER to the King's Most Excellent Majesty
1923

(52,807)

"A little lower than the Angels."

—*The Book of Psalms.*

"Her children shall rise up, and call her blessed."

—*The Book of Proverbs.*

"She is always busy being a Mother."

—*Ida L. Webster.*

"A mother is only an ordinary woman, and yet she needs the love of Jacob, the patience of Joseph, and the firmness of Daniel."

—*Anonymous.*

"She has a continual spring tide of strong and generous feeling. She always puts me in mind of the well of waters springing up unto everlasting life . . her heart . . is full of genius."

—*Erskine.*

"If the new schemes afoot, from which we hope so much, are to be successful, that important factor in the whole matter, the mother, must be the first consideration. The mother does not exist for the municipality, the medical profession, or the nurse; they exist for her, and they must remember it."

—*Maternity and Child Welfare.*

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HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MOTHER

YOU know you will have to take care of yourself, Mother Dear. If you cannot take care of yourself, you cannot take care of your home.

The Mother's good health is a very precious thing. The happiness and success of the home depend so much upon her health. And health depends on a few simple things, such as:—Sun, Air, Water, Food, Work, Rest, Recreation, Exercise, Comfort, Courage.

Of course other things, such as clothing, are important too. Health is largely a matter of habit and good common sense.

"Good Morning, Mother. You haven't a headache, have you?"

Of course you haven't, for last night you left the bed-room window open a wee little bit. It was zero last night. Sometimes it is zero in winter and that is one of the things that make us Canadians what we are.

Food

Pay even more attention to your own food than you do to the food of your husband and children.

Because—first of all, you always know what there is for dinner! And that spoils your appetite a little.

An Invitation

The cure is to have a meal occasionally out of your own house. Your husband will invite you to lunch somewhere. Your neighbour will ask you out to tea. And as soon as Mary is old enough (about ten or twelve years old) she will take charge of tea on Friday night, or on Saturday night, or on Sunday night—or on all three—and you won't know at all what there is for tea.

Your Tastes

Secondly, you have thought about other people's tastes so long and so hard, that you scarcely know what you do like yourself. Now! Now! If you like parsnips, have them—and let the others have their turnips if they want them. If you like canned corn—can it. How good these home-grown, home-canned, home-cooked vegetables are. The Women's Institutes know how. Write to that friend of yours, the Superintendent of the Women's Institutes or the Cercle des Fermières or the Home-Makers' Clubs, or the Home Economics Clubs—whichever it is—at the Parliament Buildings at

Halifax, or Fredericton, or Charlottetown, or Quebec, or Toronto, or Winnipeg, or Regina, or Edmonton, or Victoria and she will send you all the information you need, so that you can have what you like, as well as what your family like. Keep your individual tastes. Take an interest in your own meals.

Another Friend

You have another friend who takes a great interest in you in the Women's Department of the Agricultural College at Truro, N.S., or at Macdonald College, P.O., Quebec, or at Macdonald College, Guelph, Ont., or at Manitoba Agricultural College, Winnipeg, or at the Women's Division in the Department of Agriculture of the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon, or in the University of Alberta at Edmonton or in the University of British Columbia at Vancouver. She knows a great deal about foods and menus and meals and canning and calories and vitamins and all these things. She has some good pamphlets and recipes that she would be glad to send if you asked her. Write to her. She will be glad to hear from you. Her address is given above, and her name is "The Superintendent" or "The Professor of Home Economics," whichever you like.

66686—2½

Your Husband

The tea-pot, the sugar-bowl and the milk pitcher screen your plate from sight and sometimes you do not eat much, and nobody knows. The baby beats the drum upon the tray of his high chair with a spoon and must be fed, and Ex-baby No. 1 has been appeased with a bowl of bread and milk and Ex-baby No. 2 has had her meat and potatoes carefully cut. Your own dinner might have got cold. But you have a Real Husband. He is not going to have his wife neglected. He knows how to cut the piece of roast beef she likes. She likes the outside piece. He arranges the potatoes and gravy artistically on her plate and finds a clean pot-cover to cover it and puts it to keep hot over the lower part of the double-boiler or over the tea-kettle.

Now don't try to deceive him by telling him you are not hungry!

You never know till you try, and then—"Why! How good it tastes!"

Meantime he eats his own dinner, supervises Ex-baby No. 1 and Ex-baby No. 2—one on his right hand and the other on his left—brings mother's plate when the right time comes—says:

"Don't hurry, dear—I will take the baby a few minutes till you finish, and then I will bring the pie."

Take Your Share

That's all right. But what we are afraid of is that you will use the tea-tray to camouflage your position so that everybody gets better fed than mother, and she deprives herself that they may get more. Don't do that. It is not right. For their sakes, as well as for your own, you take your fair share of good wholesome food—take time and trouble to eat it carefully, slowly, and with interest and enjoyment. Keep your self-respect, if you want to have the respect even of your nearest and dearest.

Do you want them to grow up selfish, thoughtless, tyrannical, greedy? That is what happens when the mother is too unselfish.

Weight

Daddy wants to know what Mother's weight is. Here is what it ought to be.

IDEAL WEIGHT FOR WOMEN AT AGE OF MATURITY

(30 Years)

Height	Pounds	Height	Pounds
4 ft. 8 in.	112	5 ft. 5 in.	134
4 ft. 9 in.	114	5 ft. 6 in.	138
4 ft. 10 in.	116	5 ft. 7 in.	142
4 ft. 11 in.	118	5 ft. 8 in.	146
5 ft.	120	5 ft. 9 in.	150
5 ft. 1 in.	122	5 ft. 10 in.	154
5 ft. 2 in.	124	5 ft. 11 in.	157
5 ft. 3 in.	127	6 ft.	161
5 ft. 4 in.	131		

(Association of Life Insurance Medical Directors, U.S.A.)
Quoted by Mrs. Frederick in *Scientific Management in the Home.*

Don't Spoil the Family

The too-unselfish wife and mother spoils her husband and children. What is fair is fair. Do what is fair and right about your food. There is nothing wrong in taking an interest in food, studying it, talking about it, and giving it a proper place in personal and home life. But do not let the family forget that we eat to live, we do not live to eat. Don't let the children take their meals for granted, as if meals grew and were not made. Until they help their Mother and Father and know something of what "Father", "Mother" and "Home" mean they will never be good Canadians.

Air

Next to food comes air. The oxygen in the air is our most important food.

In a little house, in very severe weather, when there are no double windows, and your windows are frozen up, what shall we do? Thaw them out with hot water.

Prevention is better than cure. Never let them get frozen up.

The Window Towel

Before it gets too cold, have at hand a piece of strong coarse dry cloth. Roller towelling will

do. Just the thing. And before it gets very frosty take your dry towelling, fold it once or twice, lift your window sash, lay the towelling so that it covers the window-sill, inside and out, and then lower the sash to rest on the towelling. The window will never freeze. You can always open your window. And some air will enter through the towelling and between the sashes.

But have double windows, if possible—storm windows—with a good ventilator in the outside window. You must have fresh air.

Open the Windows

Of course in summertime our windows are open wide and as a rule they are never closed while we sleep in winter unless the window fits so loosely that you can feel a current of air blow over your fingers when you put your hand on the window-sash. That current will supply ventilation in very cold weather. But far better have the window fit well and open it as required. In very severe weather a current of cold air is often felt near a tight-fitting window. This is not fresh air and does not ventilate the room.

After breakfast and after dinner are good times to air the house. It does not take long if you open the doors and windows at once and let the air come in and out quickly. Flush out the

house with fresh air twice every day. Keep the air moving. Stagnant dead air slowly but surely kills people.

But you, Mother Dear, must also get out of the house every day. It is a very nice house, for we built it ourselves, but you must not stay in it all day. You must have sun and air.

Outdoor Air

The cellar air will come up into the house; you cannot prevent it. Your cellar is clean and tidy and dry. No one ever smelt decaying vegetables when you opened your door.

But, all the same, indoor air, especially cellar air, is never like outdoor air. You must go out every day to keep your good health, even if you only walk around the city block before the lamps are lighted, or across the park, or to the barn to see the new calf, and then take a little walk—or gather the eggs, having first gone up the little hill to where you can see your neighbour's smoke rising blue in the clear air—or the winter sunset making a glory over the western half of the township. How glad you are that there is a view on your farm. Have some windows in your house that show the sunrise and the sunset. These are fine views.

Air means outdoor air—letting the outdoor air into the house and going out to get a daily supply of outdoor air into your lungs. When you come back, if you notice the house at all close or stuffy, then air it again before you take off your wraps.

Never stay in the house all day unless you want to lose your good health and your good looks. If you want to be well and fairly energetic and look young and pretty and have rosy cheeks—go out every day.

Water

What is the largest organ in the body? The Liver? O, No. The Skin is the largest organ in the body and none is more important. What keeps it up to its work? Water. The five minutes you spend in the morning washing yourself off rapidly all over and five minutes more rubbing yourself dry and ruddy all over, will do more for your health than you know! You could not possibly put ten minutes to a better use.

The Bath

You haven't a bath-room? Never mind, you can do without it until you can get it. (But get

it as soon as you can.) Florence Nightingale said you could take a bath if you had only a cupful of water.

Your Room

You haven't a room to yourself? I am sorry —but you don't absolutely need it. (Get it as soon as you can—a little dressing-room will do). You have a screen. Good. Just put the screen round the washstand with room for you next the washstand, and there you are. Bathe quickly and use the towel thoroughly. That is good for the skin and complexion. Don't hurry too much. Rise in good time. Never neglect the call of nature to go to the toilet at a regular time every day. Take your time.

The Health Drink

Not only your skin, but your " Department of the Interior " needs water. Take three drinks of water a day, hot or cold as you prefer. Before breakfast, in the middle of the morning, and in the middle of the afternoon—a good cupful each time. How do you expect the miles of roads, tunnels, drains, food-routes, tubes, telegraphs, nerve-exchange stations and all the rest of them that are inside your body to be kept clean with-

out water? Three drinks a day, exercise, proper diet, and proper, punctual attention to the daily duty of the toilet will prevent constipation.

Work

What is the difference between work and drudgery? Work has a vision and a reason and a reward. Drudgery has none of these. No vision. No reason. No reward. Perhaps most often because we do not see the vision nor understand the reason nor recognize the reward. No household drudgery in Canada was ever equal to the mud and filth and vermin of army life drudgery, where sleep was a luxury and not a necessity and where cleanliness was impossible till rest billets were reached. But there was a vision of the real meaning of life—there was an understanding that it was for Peace, Honour and Freedom they were fighting in the trenches and there was a reward where no reward was asked and which words cannot tell.

The Mother's Work

The mother's work is of the same kind. She is giving herself for others. She is making the home where the love of Peace, Honour and Freedom grow. It was to make such a home

possible that the Warriors, Known and Unknown, fought and died.

Her husband and children are healthy and happy. Little Tommy's sturdy legs; two-year-old Sister, so clean and rosy as she rises from her afternoon nap; the little house and fireside so neat and tidy and pretty—the quiet comfort of home life, with the non-essentials left out, so that we live and not drudge—these are so satisfying and so interesting that while work is plenty and pretty constant, it is not drudgery. If you won't work you can't expect to be happy, but you must take an interest in your work if you want it to be interesting.

Special Times

There are special times when the mother's health has to be considered very carefully. There is some house-work she should not do at these times. Her work has to be lessened and lightened. Happy is the husband who can say that his wife is really better and stronger now than when she was a girl. There is no human being, not even a father or a mother, who can do as much for another human being's good health as the husband can do for his wife's good health. The doctor is often able to help the husband to do this. When the mother is about forty-five

or fifty years old and the family are all grown-up, there come other special times when the doctor can help. Sometimes the Mother needs a day in bed and then perhaps Daddy sends for his Sister and she takes on the house for a day.

Rest

Don't forget to sit down and don't stand when you can sit. And don't work all the time. Take a break and a pause in the morning's work. Clear up as you go along. Confusion makes you tired.

When you take off your morning dress after dinner, lie down a few minutes and take a rest. Then put on your afternoon dress and sit down.

Never keep on working all day. In the evening everybody should help to finish the dishes and "clear-up" so that the family may sit down together to enjoy each other's company, read aloud from books, papers, or magazines, or read to themselves, or play games or have some music.

Sleep

Are you going to get up to-morrow at five-thirty a.m.?

Then go to bed by nine o'clock.

Mother needs nine or ten hours sleep.

Everybody Helps Mother

Bring up the children to help you. Let them put away all their clothes, tools, newspapers, toys, books, and everything else in the right place as soon as they are old enough, that is, as soon as they begin to play with toys or read books. In some families Mother's work is almost doubled because "everybody leaves things round." Teach the little children to help Mother and show that you appreciate their help. It is the joy of their lives to Help Mother. The division of labour is a great principle in the home. "Everybody Helps Mother." That is the Canadian way.

The Mother's Family

Expect great things of your family, Mother Dear. They will come pretty close to the mark you make for them. They will try hard to reach the goal you set for them. Of course you won't be too particular, will you? If you are very polite to them and expect them to be very polite to you they will be polite. "Company manners" are the worst manners in the world. Good home manners are the only kind worth having—they never wear out.

Recreation

" I have not done anything nice to-day," said a lady. What a mistake. Mother never says that. She always does something nice every day. There is a wonderful pleasure in work, especially in organizing and planning work, and in doing it well. But Mother plans to do something every day that is not work. An interesting book—a walk—a visit to a friend—a new pair of gloves—some flowers planted or gathered —a little plan—a new regime started in some department of the house—all these are stimulating and change her thoughts, and that is recreation. She always has something ahead of her, this Mother Dear. She does not let her life become monotonous. She finds something every day to lift her mind and heart.

Sun, Air and Exercise

Her work is arranged so that she can get out in the morning or afternoon. She goes out in the sun whenever possible for the sun gives health. Mother does not work all day. A walk in the fresh air is good exercise and rests her more than it tires her. She comes back looking better. She owes it to herself and to her family to take some time off.

We should not give up any exercise that we enjoy. Young middle-aged people like ourselves are exercising more now than formerly. The chest, arms and shoulders need regular exercise, such as the simple " Extension Exercises " taught in schools, in the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and the Cadet Corps. The military " physicals " are much the same. Choose the simplest ones. Swinging light Indian Clubs is good exercise for the chest and arms and Mary is old enough now to do this with Mother in the mornings. It only takes about five minutes, when you are partly dressed after your bath.

Carriage

Half-way between exercise and comfort come questions of carriage and posture. Look at the next twelve people you meet, and you will be fortunate if you see half of them standing or walking in an erect and comfortable way. Perhaps not one is carrying himself or herself really well. What about you? Go and stand for a moment with your face to the wall, so that the toes of your shoes touch the base-board. Your feet are at right angles to the wall, and your chest touches the wall. Does your abdomen touch the wall too? If so, draw yourself up and

stand straight. You will find that while your chest still touches the wall your abdomen does not.

Sit Down

So far, so good. Now sit down and see if the lower part of your back is right against the back of the chair when you sit erect. If so, your posture is comfortable and correct.

Most people sit and stand with the upper part of the body—the chest—sunk too far back and the lower part—the abdomen—thrust too far forward. This position does you harm. It spoils the muscles and ruins their strength to let them sag that way. Breathing is interfered with because the lungs are squeezed instead of free, the stomach is pressed down and protrudes, and circulation cannot go on well because the arteries and veins are interfered with by the muscles which should support them. The muscles of the abdominal wall become lax and cannot perform their duty of supporting the organs and giving them room. The muscles of the back are strained, causing fatigue and backache.

Go and lie down and let every part of your body relax and rest for ten minutes. Then when you get up you can lift up your head and chest, sit or stand erect and be comfortable.

Afternoon. W. J. Turnbull.

Wasted Strength

A great deal of strength is wasted because we do not stand properly. We tire ourselves for nothing. We could accomplish twice as much with less fatigue if we remembered to stand properly. The head should be held up, the chest high, the shoulders back so that there is a central curve from shoulders to backbone, and the abdomen should not protrude.

Bending

There are two places where we can bend the body with ease and comfort and with little or no fatigue—the hips and the knees. Don't wash or work with your shoulders and waist. The great secret is to have the table or sink or bench or tub or whatever you are working at, the height which suits you. Nearly all of them are too low. If they are made the right height then the arms and legs can save the back as much as the head can save the heels.

Comfort

Never attempt to work in an uncomfortable or tiring position.

Make yourself as comfortable as possible at your work, and indeed at any time. You can do more and do it quicker and better. Take time to make your body and mind comfortable.

Courage

There is a peace of spirit to which no one has a better right than Mother. She, with the Father, does the greatest work. The rest of us are working away too,—on the farm, in the mine, the factory, the shop, the school, the Government office or somewhere else. But all we really do is to help the Father and Mother—growing their daily bread, mining their coal, making their clothes, selling their supplies, teaching their children, governing the country of which their homes are the foundation and the glory.

That peace of spirit is essential to home ideals. Mother must not be hurried, worried, driven or oppressed. Worry is one of the greatest enemies of health and happiness. She must possess herself and have the courage and faith which remove mountains. She must have a serenity of spirit of which nothing can rob her. And this it is more than anything else that we need to remember when we try to take care of Mother. Don't let her work too hard. Give her her rightful place.

Make her happy. The heart of the Mother is the centre of the charmed circle of Home.

The genius of motherhood is a natural endowment, but like all other innate gifts it is capable of improvement and evolution. Knowledge of a particular kind enlarges its application; that state of mind which we indicate by the word culture charges it with a new significance.

Educated mothers, indeed, are a necessity of civilization, since every new step which we take is begun in our nurseries. Women themselves have awakened to their need. They are turning eagerly to the sources of knowledge. As girls they show in many cases an astonishing diligence; as mothers their ideals are high. The long drudgery of home life and the care of children, when means are not adequate, is thus changed from a sullen task to a brave adventure.

—*The London Times*

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